

# Can we overcome Dualism: the source for Materialism of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries?

By

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Dr. Gorter wants his students to pay attention to the fact that it cannot be denied that natural science owes its great successes to the fact that it has limited itself to the exploration of every aspect of the sense world and does not in any way draw any conclusions from the sense world to the supersensible world. But on the other hand, many have a vague feeling in all sorts of subconscious sensations, making them unsure in life, even unsure and unable in outward actions.

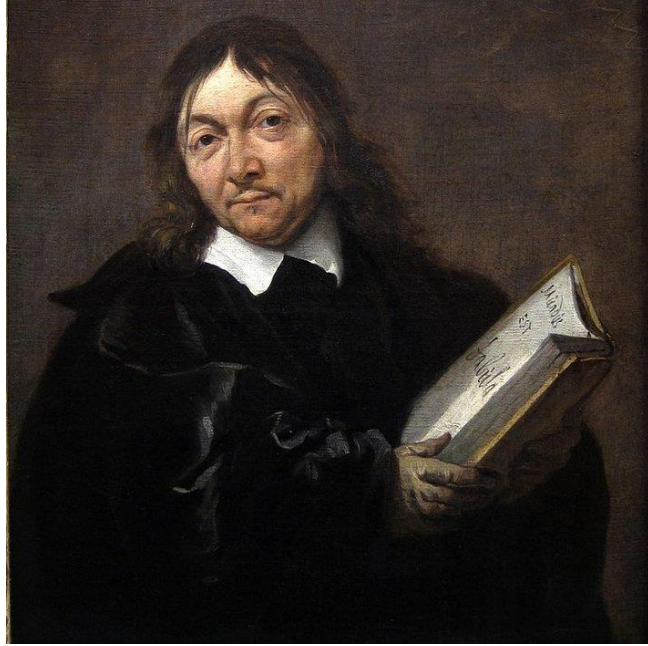
**Since Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes**, current consciousness suffers under the “Dualistic World Conception.” It became a “dogma” to separate the world into two distinctly separate areas: what is “objective” and what is “subjective.” The dogma of Bacon and Descartes and their followers is that science should always focus on what was *ponderable*, or measurable (world of quantities) and leave aside what was subjective, or *imponderable* (world of qualities).



*Francis Bacon (1561-1626)*

**Francis Bacon** (1561-1626), was an English philosopher, statesman, scientist, jurist, orator, essayist, and author. He served both as Attorney General and Lord Chancellor of England. After his death, he remained extremely influential through his works, especially as philosophical advocate and practitioner of the scientific method during the scientific revolution.

Bacon has been called the father of empiricism. His works established and popularized inductive methodologies for scientific inquiry. His demand for a planned procedure of investigating all things natural marked a new turn in the rhetorical and theoretical framework for science, much of which still surrounds conceptions of proper methodology today.



*Rene Descartes (1596-1650)*

**Rene Descartes** (1596-1650) built upon the world conceptions of Francisco Bacon and laid the foundation for 17th-century continental rationalism, later advocated by Baruch Spinoza and Gottfried Leibniz, and opposed by the empiricist school of thought consisting of Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. Leibniz, Spinoza and Descartes were all well versed in mathematics as well as philosophy, and Descartes and Leibniz contributed greatly to science as well. Descartes is perhaps best known for the philosophical statement "***Cogito ergo sum***" ("I think, therefore I am.").

Nowadays, after the end of **Kali Yuga** in 1899, it is increasingly felt that the limits one restricts oneself in this way to focus on the world of the senses only (world of quantities; the ponderable world) will set significant limits to obtaining knowledge at large. Man gradually feels that his own true being must be of supersensible nature that his true being which as man gives him his value and dignity must be found in the spiritual, in the not-sensible. If one calls a halt to all knowledge before the supersensible, then one calls a halt before human self-knowledge. Then, one renounces insight into the most precious, the most valuable in the human being himself.



***Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)***

**Rudolf Steiner** (1861-1925) put great effort to exhibiting the greatness and the weaknesses of current natural sciences when it is about human development and one's understanding of all what belongs to the world of quality ("subjective") and not to the world of quantities only ("objective").

Rudolf Steiner summarizes this development in European culture in his lecture series „The Bridge between the Ideal and the Real” in October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014 as follows:

“In all ages those who have been initiated into the Mysteries, have always uttered, and correctly, a certain saying. It is this: — “Unless a person knows how to value aright those two streams of world-conceptions which we have mentioned: — Idealism and Materialism, — he either falls through a trap-door into s kind of `cellar' as regards his view of the world, or he enters blindly along the other paths which one traverses to reach a World Conception.” Now the trap-door through which one may fall and which may very well escape notice in the “Weltanschauung,” has been regarded by the Mystery Initiates of all as the Dualism which cannot find the bridge between the Ideal — one can also call it the “spiritually-colored Ideal” — and the Materialistic, that concerned with matter. And the blind alley into which one may stray along the various paths of philosophy if one does not find the balance between Idealism and Materialism, for those same Mystery Initiates this blind alley was Fatalism.”

“Our recent epoch clearly inclines on the one side to a dualistic outlook, and on the other to a fatalistic philosophy, although these things are not admitted nor even clearly seen.”

“Now, I should like to-day, to take a personality out of the life of the twilight of the 4th Post-Atlantean epoch with reference to the life of philosophy, and give a brief sketch of him, and his outlook; and we can then consider other personalities more characteristic of the World-Conceptions of our own, the 5th Post-Atlantean epoch. A very, very characteristic personality in the Western life of thought, **St. Augustine**, who lived from the year 354 to 430 of our Christian era. We will recall certain thoughts of St. Augustine because, as you will see from the dates I have quoted, he lived in the twilight of the 4th Post-Atlantean epoch which came to an end in the 15th century. We can clearly see the approach of this end, starting from the 3rd-6th Post-Xian centuries. Now St. Augustine had to pass through the impressions of the most diverse World-Views. We have often discussed these things. Above all, St. Augustine passed through Manichaeism and Skepticism. He had taken all those impulses into his soul which one gets if on the one hand, he looks at the world and sees everything Ideal, Beautiful and Good, all that is filled with Wisdom, and then on the other hand, all that is ugly, bad and untrue. Now we know that Manichaeism only “gets on” (this is coarsely expressed, but it can be expressed in this way) — it only gets on with these two streams in the Ordering of the Cosmos, by postulating an eternal, everlasting polarity, an everlasting dualism, between Darkness and Light, Evil and Good; that which is full of Wisdom, and that which is filled with wickedness.”

“Manichaeism only ‘gets’ on with Dualism, (in its own way quite correctly), by uniting certain old pre-Christian basic concepts with its acceptance of the polarity in World-phenomena. Above all, it unites certain ideas which can only be understood when one knows that in ancient times the Spiritual world was perceived by humanity in atavistic clairvoyance, and perceived in such a way that man's visions of the Spiritual world were in their very content, similar to the impressions made by the Sense-world of perception. Now, because Manichaeism took into itself such ideas of a physical appearance, (sinnlicher Schein) of the supersensible, it thereby gives many people the impression of materializing the spirit, as though it presented the spirit in a material form. That, of course, is a mistake which more recent views

of the world have made, (as I have explained lately) a mistake even made by modern Theosophy. St. Augustine actually broke with Manichaeism because in the course of his purified life of thought, he could no longer bear this materialization of the spirit. That was one of the reasons which made him break with Manichaeism.”

“St. Augustine then also passed through Skepticism, which is a quite justifiable view of the world, in so far as it points man's attention to the fact that through the mere observation of what a person can gain from this Sense-world and his experiences therein, he can learn nothing concerning the supersensible. And, if one is of [the] opinion that one cannot stand for the supersensible, as such, one begins to doubt the existence of any knowledge of the truth itself. It was doubt of the knowledge of the Truth through which St. Augustine also passed; and thereby obtained the strongest impulses.”

“Now if one wishes to see what led St. Augustine to place himself in western philosophy, one must point to the apex of his perceptions, from which radiated all the light which rules in him, and which was also the apex of the view of the world which he finally developed. That is the point, my dear friends; and it can be characterized in the following ways: — St. Augustine came to acquire that Certainty, the true Certainty subject to absolutely no deception, which can only be acquired by man with reference to what he experiences in his inner soul. Everything else may be uncertain. Whether the things which appear to our eyes, or are audible to our ears, or which make impressions on our other Sense-organs, are really so constructed as they appear to be to the evidence of the senses, that one cannot know. We cannot even know how this it-self appears, when one shuts one's Sense organs to it, That is the way in which persons think of the external perceptible world, who think after the way of St. Augustine. They think this externally perceptible world, as it lies before us, can offer no unconditional certainty, can give no unconditioned truth; that man can gain nothing out of it on which he can stand on a firm substantial point. On the other hand, a man is present in what he experiences in his inner soul; quite regardless as to how he experiences it there, he himself experiences those ideas and feelings in his inner being. He knows himself to be living in his own inner experiences. And so, to such a thinker as St. Augustine, the fact is substantiated by his own inner experiences; — that, with reference to what man experiences in his inner sou<sup>1</sup> as truth, he

gives himself over to no possibility of deception. One can relieve that everything else the world says is subject to deception, but one cannot possibly doubt that what one experiences in one's inner being, as one's ideas and feelings, is the truth; that is certain. That firm basis for the admittance of an indisputable truth formed one of the starting-points of the Augustinian philosophy.”

“Again in a striking way, in the 5th Post-Atlantean epoch, Descartes again took up that point; he lived from 1596 to 1650, thus in the dawn of the 5th Post-Atlantean epoch. His assertion: — “I think, therefore I exist,” which remains true even if we doubt everything else that he takes as his starting point, and in this perception he simply takes the standpoint of St. Augustine.”

“Now my dear friends, the fact is that with reference to any world-conception one must always say: A man who lives at a particular point of time in human evolution acquires certain views: — only those who come later can see these. One must say that it is always reserved for those who come afterwards to see things in a more radical, true way, than does the person who has to utter them at a certain period of time in human evolution. One cannot get away from this fact; and it would be well, if especially from our Anthroposophical standpoint, as I have often told you, if it were recognized consciously and thoroughly, that even what is said now, even that we acquire as ever such advanced knowledge about Spiritual things, that must not be grasped as a sum of absolute dogmas. We must be quite clear that those who come after us, in future times, will see greater than we ourselves can. On this rests the true Spiritual evolution of mankind and everything of a hindering nature in the Spiritual progress of mankind rests finally on the fact that human beings will not admit this. They like to have truths presented to them, not as the truths for one definite epoch of time, but as absolute timeless dogmas.”

“And so, from our point of view, we can look back on St. Augustine and shall have to say: If one stands on St. Augustine's standpoint, one must sharply look to this; that he assumes uncertainty as to the truths of all external revelations, and true certainty only in the experience of what we carry in our souls. Now, if one gives oneself to such a perception as that, it presupposes that, as a human being, one has certain courage. One would not perhaps need to mention so decidedly what I am now going to say, unless we had to admit

the fact that it is characteristic of the world-view of our present age that it lacks courage, the lack of courage I refer to here is expressed in two directions. The one is this. When a person boldly admits, as did St. Augustine, that you can only find true certainty as regards what you yourself experience in your inner being, then the other pole of this courage should be there which is not there in our present age. One must also have the courage to admit that thin true Certainty concerning reality is not to be found in external Sense-Revelation. It requires real inner courage in one's thought to deny external Reality in its utterances that true Certainty, which is held by modern Materialism as absolutely secure. “

“And, on the other hand, it requires courage to admit that true certainty only comes when one is truly conscious of what one experiences inwardly. Certainly such things are said, even in our times, and there are those who demand this two-fold courage of their fellow-man, if they are anxious to create a world-conception. But one has to think differently about these things to-day, if one wishes to think exhaustively. And herein the whole historical position of St. Augustine is revealed for modern mankind, because one has to think differently about these matters. To-day one must know something which neither Augustine nor Descartes took into consideration. I have spoken of this where I discuss Descartes, in my book “The Riddles of Man.” To-day we must admit: The belief that one can come to a satisfactory philosophy through a grasp of one's immediate inner being as man, as it offers itself to-day, — the belief that one can reach a firm standpoint in one's inner being, — is refuted every time one goes to sleep. Every time a person to-day passes into the unconsciousness of sleep, from him is snatched that absolute certainty of inner experience of which St. Augustine spoke, — the Reality of that inner experience is snatched from him. Every time you go to sleep until the moment of waking, the reality of real experience forsakes you. And the man of our age to-day, who experiences his inner being in a different way from that of the 4th Post-Atlantean age, even from that of the twilight of the age of St. Augustine, has to admit: “No matter how acute a certainty is experienced in one's inner being, yet for man's life after death, there is no certainty at all; for the simple reason that the reality of his experiences sinks into the realm of the unconscious, every time he goes to sleep, and a modern human being does not even know whether it does not pass into Unreality, and so what man apparently



experiences securely in his inner being is not made safe from attack. That may not be theoretically refuted perhaps, but the very fact of sleep contradicts it.”

“Now if we turn attention to what has just been said, we recognize how, in reality, St. Augustine with a far greater justification than Descartes later, (who after all only merely repeated St. Augustine in another age) with what right St. Augustine could arrive at his view. Through the entire 4th Post-Atlantean epoch, and even through the age of St. Augustine, there still lived in human beings something of an echo of the old atavistic clairvoyance. History to-day unfortunately notices those things far too little and really knows little of them; but numerous were those persons throughout the whole 4th Post-Atlantean ago who, from their personal experiences knew that there existed a Spiritual life. Because they beheld it. And in the 4th Post-Atlantean age — it was different in the 3rd or in the 2nd Post-Atlantean epochs — in the 4th age they beheld it chiefly because it played into their life of sleep. So that we may say: In the 4th Post-Atlantean epoch it was not the case for human beings, (as it became later in the 5th epoch), that their sleep transpired completely unconsciously. Those human beings of the 4th Post-Atlantean epoch knew that, from sleeping until waking up, there was a time in which all that they had as ideas, as feelings from waking to sleeping, still continued to work, but in other forms. Their waking life of truth dived down, as it were, into a dim, but conscious life of sleep. In that age one still knew that what was experienced as inner truth, was not only truth but also reality, because one knew those moments of sleeping life in which was revealed, not merely as an abstract life but as a real concrete life in the spirit, what one had experienced in one's inner being. It is not a question to-day of proving whether St. Augustine himself could say, from his own experience, “I know myself that during the time between going to sleep and waking, there arises an experience which is true, even if not real inwardly.” The fact that one could grasp such a perception, on which one could stand firm, was still absolutely possible in the age of St. Augustine.”

“Now, you see, if you take what I have just said with reference to the subjective nature of man, and generalize it over the whole Macrocosm, you come to something else. You come to that condition from which subjective nature in an older epoch, and still in the 4th Post-Atlantean period, has really preceded; that from which it really became possible. Let us speak for a moment of the pre-Christian era. You must bear in mind that the Mystery of Golgotha is

the dividing line between those ancient atavistic perceptions and the newer ones, which are only to-day in their beginning. In that pre-Christian age one could still cling to certain living Mystery-Truths. The Mystery Truths, to which I am now referring, are those which pertain especially to the great secret of Birth and Death. That is considered by certain Mystery Initiates as a secret which, they think, may not be referred to among the profane. (I have also spoken of this in recent lectures). They consider that those secrets should not be imparted to the world, because the world is not yet ripe to receive them. In that pre-Christian epoch there was in the Mysteries a certain view concerning the connection between Birth and Death in the great Cosmic Life into which man with his entire being is inserted. In that pre-Christian age, through those Mysteries, man turned his attention especially to Birth, to all the processes of being born into the world. Anyone who is acquainted with the World-views of ancient times, knows also what emphasis was laid on the process of Birth, — of Arising, Sprouting, Growing; — all those processes, all those ancient views, especially concerned themselves with this. I have often emphasized what a gigantic contrast appeared through the Mystery of Golgotha. I have put it in the following way. Just think how, 600 years before the Mystery of Golgotha, Buddha, who stands ever in the evolution of man as the conclusion of the pre-Christian World-Conception, is led to his conceptions because, amongst other things, he beholds a corpse. “Death is suffering.” It becomes an axiom with the Buddha, that suffering must be overcome, a means must be found to be able to turn away from death. The corpse is that from which Buddha turns, in order to come to something which for him, can though spiritualized, can be filled with Sprouting, Growing life.”

“If we now turn to 600 years after the Mystery of Golgotha, to another part of the world, and other human beings, we see that the vision of the Corpse of Christ on the Cross is not something which man has to turn away from, but to which he has to turn, which is regarded whole-heartedly as the symbol that can solve the riddles of the Cosmos in so far as they refer to man and his development.”

“There is a wonderful connection within this 1200 years, six hundred years Before Golgotha, the turning away from a corpse gives an uplift to one's concept of the World; 600 years after Golgotha there is developed a symbol, The Image of the Crucifix, a turning towards death, towards a corpse, in order

to create those forces from that Corpse, by which one can reach a concept of the world able to throw light on human evolution. Among the many things which show the mighty transformation which appeared in earthly evolution through the Mystery of Golgotha, there is this Buddha symbol, this turning away from the corpse; and then comes the Christ-symbol, the turning towards the Corpse — the Corpse of that Being Who is regarded as the highest Being ever seen on the Earth.”

“It was really the case that in a certain connection the old Mysteries put the Mystery of Birth in the very center of their world-conception. But therewith, my dear friends, (since we are talking of Mystery-knowledge and not merely giving forth trivial views) therewith you have before your souls a deep cosmological secret. Your attention is turned to that with which is connected the life of Birth in the World's evolution.”

“And one does not come to understand this life of Birth in the Cosmos unless one can go back to the Riddle of the Old Moon: incarnation of the Earth before it became Earth was Old Moon, and in many of the phenomena connected with our present Moon, that camp-follower, so to speak of the Old Moon. — (you can read this up in my “Outline of Occult Science”) — in various phenomena connected to-day with the present Moon, with this straggler, we simply have the after effects of what occurred in the Moon-Incarnation of the Earth, at the time which preceded our earthly development.”

“Now, there would be no such thing as Birth in all the kingdoms of nature, there would be nothing born on the Earth, were it not that the law of the Old Moon prevailed through this straggler, which is the satellite of our Earth. All birth in the various kingdoms of nature and man is dependent on the activity of the Moon. With this is also connected the fact that the Initiates of the ancient Hebrews regarded Jehovah as the Moon-God, as a Divine Being who arranged the process of bringing forth; Jehovah was honored as a Moon-Divinity. It was clearly seen that cosmologically, behind all the processes of birth throughout all the kingdoms, there ruled the laws of the Moon. And so one could, I might say, symbolically utter a deep secret of Cosmology by saying: when the Moonlight falls on the Earth, on what is represented through this light, depends everything connected with all the Sprouting, Growing and ‘being born’ on the Earth. In those pre-Christian ages one did not turn in the highest

Mysteries to the life of the Sun, one turned to the reflected sunlight, that is, to the Moon, whenever the secret of Birth was alluded to. And the peculiar “Nuances” which were poured over the depths of those pre-Christian conceptions depended on the fact that the initiates knew the Mysteries or the Moon.”

“They regarded the Sun Mysteries as something quite veiled, something hardly bearable for a humanity not fully prepared, because they knew that it is a deception, a maya, to believe that through the rays of the Sun falling on the Earth those things which Sprout and Grow are enchanted out of the various kingdoms of nature. That is a deception, a maya. It was known that from the life of the Sun did not depend on the process of Birth, but, on the contrary, the decaying, decreasing life, the process of Death. These were the secrets of the Mysteries. The Moon causes things to be born, but the Sun causes them to die. And, however highly for other reasons the Sun-life was honored in those pre-Christian Mysteries, the Sun-life was honored as the cause of Death. The fact that beings had to die was not to be ascribed to the Sun, the 2nd incarnation of the Earth, but has to be ascribed to the resent Sun, which appears so magnificently on the horizon.”

“Well, the decay of life, the opposite of birth, is connected with the Sun-life, but, my dear friends, there was something else, not so important in that pre-Christian age, but very especially important in our post-Christian age: and that is, that all conscious life is connected with Sun-life, and that conscious life through which man has especially to pass in the course of his earthly evolution, that consciousness which shines forth especially in the 5th Post-Atlantean age to which we ourselves belong, that is most intensely connected with the Sun-life. Only we must consider this Sun-life spiritually, as we have attempted to do in the course of lectures given this Summer. For, if indeed the Sun is the creator of Death, of the decaying life in the Cosmos and also of man, yet the Sun is at the same time the creator of conscious life. The conscious life was not so important in the pre-Christian ages, because it was then replaced by an atavistic clairvoyant life, which still remained as an inheritance of the Moon. For our post-Christian age it has however become important, far more important than life. Consciousness has become more important than life, because only through consciousness can the goal of earthly evolution be reached — which is, that this consciousness should be attained in the

corresponding way by the humanity on earth. You must receive this consciousness from the giver, the Sun, from which comes the living into Death and not the life of Birth.”

“Therefore the Mystery of Golgotha appears as that power in earthly development which has now become the most important thing for this evolution: — the Son of the Sun, the Christ, Who passed through the Body of Jesus of Nazareth, — That is connected with the deepest Cosmic secrets. The ancient Mystery Initiates said to their pupils:

Try to recognize through your sleep-life how the Moon-forces are playing into it. (We know that even waking-man is partially asleep). Try to recognize the MOON-life in your sleep-life, for it plays into your sleep-life, as the Silvery Moon-shine plays into the darkness of night.”

“The Christian Initiates on the contrary said to their disciples: “Try to recognize that in your waking-life consciousness shines; for the Sun-Forces pour into your waking-life, just as from morning till evening the Sun shines outside in the life of the Earth.”

“You see, this reversal was fulfilled through the Mystery of Golgotha, and, whereas in pre-Christian ages the most important thing was to recognize the origin of Life, it has now become the most important thing to recognize the origin of Consciousness. Only through learning to unite this cosmological wisdom with what man experiences as true certainty in his soul, which means, only by grasping Spiritual Science with one's Inner Being, does man come to see the Spiritual Reality concealed in that which otherwise lacks this reality in his inner being.”

“Now with those means possessed by St. Augustine, the means possessed by those who stand on an Augustinian basis, one cannot get very far, because every sleep refutes the real certainty of one's inner experiences. Only when its Reality is added to this inner experience does man come to a really firm stand on the basis of his inner experience.”

“You see, my dear friends, that which we think to-day, that which we feel to-day in our present life on Earth, has not as yet any reality. This is even recognized to-day, by a few scientifically-thinking men. What we think and feel in our inner soul is unreal at present; and that is just the peculiarity — that

which we experience most intimately, that which shines indubitably in us as truth, without doubt that at present has no reality. But this is really the fruitful seed for our next earthly life. That of which St. Augustine was speaking, and for which there is no guarantee of its reality, that we may say, is the seed for the next earthly life. We can say: — it is true that the truth shines in our inner being, but it shines simply as a gleam, (Schein). To-day it is still but a gleam, but in our earthly incarnation that which now is gleam, and as such is simply a germ, will become a fruit which animates our next incarnation, as the seed of the plant this year will animate the visible plant of next year. Only when we conquer time can we find in what we now experience inwardly, a reality. Of course we should not be the human being we are and that we should be, if we experienced our inward truth as though it were a reality like the external world. We should never become free. There could be no question of freedom; we should not even be personalities, we should simply be woven into an ordering of Nature, and whatever occurred in us would occur of necessity. We are only personalities and especially free personalities, because from out of the weaving of natural events there arises as a kind of miracle, the gleam (der Schein) of those things which we experience in our inner soul and which will only become external reality, like that of our environment, in our next earthly incarnation.”

“It is the deceptive nature of our age to which all fantasy still gives itself, that we do not take into consideration the fact that what springs up inwardly as an unreality in one earthly incarnation, becomes a concrete reality in the next. We shall speak further on this point in the next two lectures.”

“We see how from the standpoint we have acquired to-day we can look back at the standpoint of St. Augustine, how we can understand him, and to a certain extent can see in him what he himself could not yet see. Thus St. Augustine stands for us as an especially significant figure in the twilight of the 4th Post-Atlantean age, because with especial sharpness he points to the one stream in world-happiness to the stream of the Ideal; and in this stream he seeks to find a firm point. St. Augustine sought that firm point. To-day we only want to bring forward the historical fact.”

“There had not yet come to people in his age that tremendous swing of the pendulum which came about with the Mysteries of Birth and of Death; for only out of this Mystery of Death of which we shall speak further tomorrow,

can one find a real substantiation of the absolute certainty of what man experiences inwardly as Truth.”

“We shall now have to make a great jump. Just as we have characterized what reveals itself in St. Augustine as representative of the twilight of the 4th Post-Atlantean age, so we will take certain personalities characteristic of our 5th Post-Atlantean age, and study them according to a certain direction. Of these I will select two.”

“One of those persons in whom a certain tendency was developed which is characteristic for the 5th age, is Count Saint-Simon, who lived from 1766 to 1825, another is a pupil of Saint-Simon, **Auguste Comte\***, who lived from 1798 to 1857. If we have in St. Augustine a personality who, with all the means which stood at his disposal, sought through his knowledge, to substantiate Christianity, so on the other hand in Saint-Simon and also in Auguste Comte, we see personalities who are led completely astral [astray?] as regards Christianity. We can best gain a clear idea of what lived in Auguste Comte, as also in a certain sense in Saint-Simon, if we briefly outline the chief thoughts of Auguste Comte.”

“Auguste Comte is to a great extent representative of a certain world-view in our age; and it is only due to the fact that people trouble so little as to how certain impulses in philosophy incorporate themselves into the life of man, that Auguste Comte is regarded as a kind of rarity, in historical life. These persons do not know how, perhaps not quite everywhere, but still in countless human beings, Auguste Comte exercises a school-masterly influence in the essential directions of their thinking, and one may say that Auguste Comte is representative of a great portion of the philosophical life of the present.”

“Auguste Comte says that humanity has developed through two stages, and has now reached its third stage. If one observes the soul-life of men through these three stages, one finds in the first stage that the ideas of man tended mostly towards Demonology. The first stage of evolution in the Comte sense is the demonological stage. Human beings imagined that behind the sensible phenomena of Nature supersensible Spiritual beings were active and operative; spirits were imagined everywhere in trivial life — demons were threatening everywhere, big demons and little demons. That was the first stage.”

“Then men passed on, as they developed. A little further, from the standpoint of Demonology to that of Metaphysics. Whereas they first thought demons, elementary beings, were behind all phenomena, they then put abstract ideas in their place. — People became Metaphysical when they no longer it wasted to be believers in demons. Thus the second stage is that of Metaphysics. They united certain concepts with their own life, and thought that through those ideas they could come to the basis of things.””

“But man has now gone beyond this stage. He has entered on the third stage, in which Auguste Comte quite in the sense of his master Saint-Simon, assumes that man no longer looks on demons, no longer looks to metaphysical concepts when seeking the basis of the World, but simply to that which results as the Sense-Reality of positivistic science. The third stage is therefore the stage of Positivism, of Positivistic Science. The revelations to be obtained simply through external scientific experience should be regarded by man as leading to a world-conception. He should explain himself in the same way as the metaphysical explanation given about the orderings of space, as physics explain the law of Forces, Chemistry the ordering of Substances, or Biology the ordering of Life. Just as everything can thus be explained by the different Sciences, so Comte tried to present a like harmony in his great work on Positive Philosophy. Everything which can be experienced through the various positive Sciences is considered by Comte as the sole thing worthy of men in the third stage. Christianity itself he still considers as the highest development of the last phase of Demonology. Then appeared Metaphysics, — which gave man a number of abstract concepts. But a concrete reality which alone can give an existence worthy of man on Earth, that can be given by Positive Science alone, according to Comte. And so he even tries to found a Church on the basis of positive Science, to bring man into such social structures as can be grasped on a basis of Positive Science. It is very extraordinary to see to what things Auguste Comte really came at last. I will only bring forward a few really characteristic features. He occupied himself a great deal with the founding of a Positivistic Church. Now if you just take the various points, you will at once perceive the spirit of it. This Positivistic Church was to bring out a kind of Calendar. A certain number of the days of the year were to be devoted, for instance, to the memory of such people as Newton or Galileo, or Kepler; the bearers of Positivistic Science. These days were to be devoted to their veneration. Other



days should then be devoted to the condemnation of such people as Julian the Apostate or Napoleon. All that was to be regulated. Life itself was to be regulated with a great sweep, according to the basic principles of Positivistic Science.”

“Now anyone who knows life today knows that no great number of human beings would take such ideals as those of Auguste Comte seriously although that is simply cowardice, because in truth people do think as Auguste Comte did. If one studies the image the Positivistic Church of Comte gives, one actually gets the impression that the structure of his Church accords absolutely and entirely with that of the Roman Catholic Church. Only the Christ is lacking in the Positivistic Church of Auguste Comte, and that is the extraordinary thing. That in just what we must place before our souls as characteristic. — Auguste Comte seeks a Catholic Church without the Christ. That is what he came to, when he took those three stages into his soul; — Demonology, Metaphysics and Positivism. And one can say he took over all the “clothing” of Christianity, as it came to him out of history. He considered the clothing very good; but the Christ Himself he wished to banish out of his Church. That is the essential point round which everything revolves in Auguste Comte:

**“A Catholic Church without the Christ.”**

“That, my dear friends, is infinitely characteristic of the dawn of the 5th Post-Atlantean age, because as Auguste Comte thought, so a spirit had to think who had absorbed in his soul the element of Romanism, and thought from out of this element of Romanism, while at the same time he thought fully in the sense of the 5th Post-Atlantean epoch, with its so absolutely anti-spiritual character. And to Auguste Comte and his teacher Saint-Simon, are in the highest degree characteristic of the dawning of our 5th Post-Atlantean age. But in this 5th age many things have yet to be decided, and therefore other shadings appear which are still also possible. I just want to throw a few historical lights before you to-day, on which we can then build further.”

“An extraordinary contrast to Auguste Comte is **Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling** (1775-1854); and he also is to a certain extent characteristic of the dawn of our 5th Post-Atlantean age. Of course, one cannot put before you even diagrammatically the world-view of Schelling. We have spoken often of it from this or the other point of view — it is most manifold in itself. One cannot

even give you any idea now of its structure, but can only point out various characteristics.”

Rudolf Steiner: “I told you St. Augustine takes his stand in the twilight of the 4th Post-Atlantean age with the purpose, so to observe the one stream, the Ideal, that thereby he could get a firm point on which to stand. We now enter on the 5th Post-Atlantean Age. In its dawn we have such spirits as Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte who, in a purely natural materialistic ordering, seek a firm point in positivistic science. Thus we have two streams — Augustine on the one side, Auguste Comte on the other. Schelling seeks to get behind what can be seen in the world with the ordinary means of the 5th Post-Atlantean age; he seeks first abstractly and philosophically for a bridge between the Ideal and the Real, the Ideal and the Material. He tried with infinite energy to find the bridge. (You can find the essential points of this in my book “Riddles of Man.”) He seeks with infinite energy to bridge over that opposition and he came at first to all kinds of abstract thoughts in the course of this bridge-building. While he first built on the same basis as Johann Gottlieb Fichte, he went a little further, and attempted to grasp something in the world as real Being — something which is both the Ideal and the Real at the same time. Then came a time in Schelling's life in which it appeared impossible to him, with the methods of abstractions brought to him in the course of time out of the 5th Post-Atlantean age, to build a bridge between those two. So he said one day: “Human beings have really only acquired on the basis of their modern learning concepts by which they can grasp the external ordering of Nature. But we have no concepts by means of which we can come behind this external Nature to that sphere where one could build a bridge between the Ideal and External Reality.” It is extremely interesting that one day Schelling made the following admission. He said, it appeared to him as though the learned people of the last centuries had concluded a silent contract tending to wipe out everything of a deeper nature, — all that could lead one to a real true life. Therefore he said: “We meet turn to the unlearned people.” That was the time when Schelling started studying Jacob Boehme, and found in him that Spiritual deepening which then guided him to his final and theosophical period of life, from which proceeded his wonderful books the “Freedom of Man,” “The Gods of Samathrace,” the Kabiri Divinities; followed by his “Philosophy of Mythology” and the “Philosophy of Revolution.”

“Now what Schelling most sought, especially in the last period of his life, was to understand the intervention of the Mystery of Golgotha into the history of mankind. That he sought especially; and while so doing it occurred to him that, with the ideas at the disposal of modern learning, one could never really understand the life which flows from the Mystery of Golgotha; which means that one could never come to understand the true life of man. Thereby Schelling formed the conclusion, (and that is the tendency which I want to emphasize especially now: — we will build further on this in the next lecture) — which is in complete contrast to that of his contemporary, Auguste Comte. That is the remarkable thing. We may say that Auguste Comte seeks a Catholicism, or I might better say a Catholic Church, without Christianity; Schelling, with his views, sought a Christianity without a Church. Schelling seeks, as it were, to Christianize the whole of modern life, to permeate it with Christianity; so that everything which human beings can Think and Feel and Will is absolutely saturated by the Christ-Impulse. He does not seek a separate clerical life for Christianity, especially not after the type found in historical evolution, although he studied this life very carefully.”

“Thus we have those two extremes — Auguste Comte's thought, of a Church without Christ, and Schelling's thought, of a Christ without a Church.”

“I just wanted to place these historical views before your soul, in order to be able to build further on these things. We have seen one spirit who seeks a firm starting point in Idealism — A spirit, Auguste Comte, who seeks a firm starting point in Realism, and then a personality such as Schelling who seeks to build a bridge between them. Both these tendencies preceded the evolution in which we ourselves are engaged.”

“We may say the following: — we can now survey those things which have contributed through many centuries to the life of World-Conceptions, and then we can turn our attention to the way in which these ideas have developed in the widest circles of human beings. The study of Auguste Comte gives a very important *Aperçu*, but Comte himself could not attain this, because he stuck so rigidly to his positivistic prejudices. But something which can give us an important starting point for our considerations for the next day results, when we see in an *Aperçu* the connection between St. Augustine, Auguste Comte, and Schelling, I will just put this at the conclusion of these considerations,

because I should like it to have a place in your souls. We shall then have to speak of that which is connected in a significant way with just this. Now, as this *Aperçu* results from a consideration of what I have told you, I will simply put aphoristically, without giving the foundations for it in detail, the reason why this, which is not to be found in Auguste Comte, is to be found in others. I have told you that it is important not to consider the life of these World-views individually in the abstract, but one must regard them as incorporated into the entire life of humanity. Only thereby does one reach a standpoint of reality, when one can see the incorporation of these things into the collective life of mankind.”

“It was clear to Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte that they could only come to their positivism in recent times, that it would have been impossible in an earlier age. Auguste Comte feels it especially strongly; he says approximately “My mode of thought is only possible in our Age.” That is something which is of infinite importance in our modern Movement, and in connected with that *Aperçu* to which I am referring. If one takes what Auguste Comte considers as a starting point for his threefold division, one can say in his sense, that this threefold division is Theology, Metaphysics, and what he calls Positivistic Science.”

“It is very characteristic that one can put this question: “Who will most easily be a believer in any one of these directions?” I beg you not to misunderstand what I am saying with reference to this *Aperçu* not even to grasp it as a one-sided radical dogma to be applied very roughly with absolute certainty to our present age, but to take it as applying to the whole evolution of man, as it must be if one will regard what I now say. One can ask: not “who will be a believer?” but “Who will most easily be a believer in any one of these directions? From a very careful consideration, contradictory to facts as it may seem, this results: — The one who most easily becomes a believer in Theology (please, not a bearer, not a theologian, nor a worker, but simply a believer; I am not speaking of religion but of Theology) is the Soldier. The person who most easily becomes a believer in Metaphysics is the Official, especially the legal Official. And the person who is most easily becomes a believer in Positivistic Science is the Industrial.”

“It is important if one must judge life, not to remain in the abstract, but to look at it quite unprejudiced, and then such questions have to be put.”

“I just want this quite treated as an Aperçu which results when one intimately studies Auguste Comte, because he was conscious that he was only completely comprehensible to the Industrials; and only In an Industrial Age could he appear on the scene with his views. That is connected with the fact that the Industrial is most easily a follower of Positivistic Science; the Soldier most easily a believer not merely of Christian but of any Theology; and the Official most easily a believer, a follower of Metaphysics.”



*Auguste Comte (1798-1857)*

**\*Auguste Comte** grew up in the wake of the French Revolution. He rejected religion and royalty, focusing instead on the study of society, which he named "sociology." He broke the subject into two categories: the forces holding society together ("social statics") and those driving social change ("social dynamics"). Comte's ideas and use of scientific methods greatly advanced the field.

Comte was born in the shadow of the French Revolution and as modern science and technology gave birth to the Industrial Revolution. During this time, European society experienced violent conflict and feelings of alienation. Confidence in established beliefs and institutions was shattered. Comte spent much of his life developing a philosophy for a new social order amidst all the chaos and uncertainty.

In 1826, he began presenting a series of lectures to a group of distinguished French intellectuals. However, about one-third of the way through the lecture series, he suffered a nervous breakdown. Despite periodic hospitalization over the next 15 years, he produced his major work, the six-volume *Course of Positive Philosophy*. In this work, Comte argued that, like the physical world, society operated under its own set of laws.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auguste\\_Comte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auguste_Comte)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_TN50oqles](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_TN50oqles)



*Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854)*

**Ritter Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling**, (1775-1854) was a German philosopher and one of the most significant representatives of the German Idealism. Schelling was the founder of the „speculative nature philosophy (worldview) that dominated natural sciences in Germany (1800-1830). His postulation of the existence of the „Unconsciousness“(„Philosophie des Unbewussten“) paved the way for Psychoanalysis, of which **Sigmund Freud** was the most significant proponent during the second half of the 19th century. Schelling’s philosophy built a bridge between the polar worldviews of Emanuel Kant and Hegel and also a bridge between the “Vernunft” (*Rationalism*) and the German (European Continental) *Idealism*.



*Portrait of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (dated 1831, the year of Hegel's death)*

**Philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel** (1770-1831) was one of the main creators of German Idealism. He explored how contradictions ultimately integrated to create the whole.

Hegel: “Genuine tragedies in the world are not conflicts between right and wrong. They are conflicts between two rights.”

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel studied philosophy and classics at Tübingen. After graduation he became a tutor and an editor and explored theology. His first published success was *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (The Phenomenology

of Spirit) in 1807. Hegel taught at Heidelberg and Berlin, publishing work on dialectical thinking and theories of totality. He died of cholera in 1831.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was the eldest of three children born to Georg Ludwig, who worked for the civil service, and Maria Magdalena, the daughter of a high-ranking lawyer at the Württemberg court. His mother taught Wilhelm Latin declensions before he started Latin school at age 5, after attending the German school at age 3. Although she died of a fever when Wilhelm was in his early teens (he and his father narrowly escaped the same fate), she instilled in him a love of learning, and he avidly absorbed the writings of Enlightenment philosophers.

After studying at the elite Gymnasium Illustre preparatory school in Stuttgart, he went on to study at the seminary school at the University of Tübingen, because his father was urging him to join the clergy. But friendships forged with other students, such as his roommate Friedrich W.J. von Schelling, sparked Hegel's interest in forming his own philosophy, which subverted the prevailing influence of Aristotle and of other popular philosophies. When Hegel graduated, he instead became a private tutor.

When Hegel's father died just before 1800, leaving him a small inheritance, Hegel was able to concentrate more fully on his system of philosophy, which had begun with religious and social themes, but began to move more toward educational reform. Building on Immanuel Kant's transcendental idealism and Rousseau's politics, Hegel developed an elaborate system of philosophy incorporating history, ethics, government and religion, and began publishing his philosophical treatises, while working as an unpaid university lecturer along with his old college friends.

Ultimately Hegel's philosophy rejected Kant's and other popular theories as too restrictive. He developed what is called dialectical thinking, as laid out in his first major work, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, which was intended to be part one of his comprehensive scientific system, but was so big that it could only serve as an introduction.

Unlike Aristotle's philosophy, Hegelianism is not a "method" or set of principles, but experiential, with experiences becoming data points in forming the whole. It holds that reality is unfolding, like the chambers of a shell, and



that "the rational alone is real." Hegel eschewed Absolute Mind (or Spirit) as a vantage point, in favor of the common, everyday state of mind, whereby a series of moments makes up the whole, defined as "totality."

Hegel said, perhaps hubristically, "...in writing that book I became aware of employing a new and unprecedented way of thinking." But he clarified his system by likening it to grammar: "You only really see the rewards when you later come to observe language in use and you grasp what it is that makes the language of poetry so evocative." His structure for this logic was an incorporation of thesis and antithesis into synthesis—nothing is negated; it all works together to form the whole.

From 1808 to 1815 Hegel taught philosophy and served as headmaster at a school in Nuremberg after working briefly as a newspaper editor, a job he disliked. During this time, when Hegel was around 40, he married Marie von Tucher. They went on to have three children together: a daughter who died in infancy and sons Karl and Immanuel. Earlier, Hegel had fathered an illegitimate son, Ludwig. His sister Christiane, who had been deeply distressed by his marriage, offered opportunity for Hegel's study of psychosis.

In 1816, Hegel became chair of philosophy at the University of Heidelberg and published the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, which brought him acclaim and advanced him to the position of chair of philosophy at the University of Berlin.

Hegel died in Berlin on November 14, 1831, during an outbreak of cholera. In 1820, he had published Elements of the Philosophy of Right, but many of his lectures and other works were published after his death. His sister, distraught over his death, committed suicide three months later.

Hegel's principal achievement is his development of a distinctive articulation of idealism sometimes termed "absolute idealism", in which the dualisms of, for instance, mind and nature and subject and object are overcome. His philosophy of spirit conceptually integrates psychology, the state, history, art, religion, and philosophy. His account of the master–slave dialectic has been highly influential, especially in 20th-century France. Of special importance is his concept of spirit (Geist: sometimes also translated as "mind") as the historical manifestation of the logical concept and the "sublation" (Aufhebung:

integration without elimination or reduction) of seemingly contradictory or opposing factors; examples include the apparent opposition between nature and freedom and between immanence and transcendence. Hegel has been seen in the 20th century as the originator of the thesis, antithesis, synthesis triad; however, as an explicit phrase, this originated with Johann Gottlieb Fichte.

Hegel has influenced many thinkers and writers whose own positions vary widely. Karl Barth described Hegel as a "Protestant Aquinas", while Maurice Merleau-Ponty wrote that "All the great philosophical ideas of the past century—the philosophies of Marx and Nietzsche, phenomenology, German existentialism, and psychoanalysis—had their beginnings in Hegel."

Hegel is considered the last of the great philosophical-system builders of modern times, but his philosophies quickly became politicized, set in opposition to champions of individualism such as **Søren Kierkegaard** and **Arthur Schopenhauer**. **Karl Marx** and extremists on the Fascist-to-Communist spectrum inverted Hegelianism so that the rational whole being greater than the sum of its parts became a justification for authoritarian creeds.

Although Hegel remains a divisive figure, his canonical stature within Western philosophy is universally recognized.